

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed October 13, 2010. Before this Amendment, claims 1, 2, and 4-14 were pending. In this Amendment, claims 1, 2, and 4-14 have been amended. No claims have been canceled or added. Applicants submit that no new subject matter has been introduced by the amendments or the new claims. After entry of this Amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 1, 2, and 4-14 will be pending. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

A telephone interview was conducted on January 28, 2011 to discuss the Office Action rejections. The interview participants were Examiner Parker and Applicants' representative Houtan Amanat (Reg. No. 61506).

In the interview, claim 1 was discussed and the rejection based upon U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0059095 (hereinafter "Cook"). With respect to claim 1, Applicant presented arguments differentiating the claim from reference Cook. Amendments to claim 1 to further clarify the differences between the claim and reference Cook were also discussed. While no agreement was reached, the Examiners agreed to review the rejections of the claims in light of the discussed differences. The claims have been amended as discussed with the Examiners. Patentability arguments discussed with the Examiners during the interview are summarized below.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiners for their time and careful consideration of the matters presented.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S. C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 2, and 4-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,067,525 (hereinafter "Johnson") and in further view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0093262 (hereinafter "Weston").

To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the prior art reference, or references when combined, must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. There must also be

a teaching or suggestion to combine the references or it must be shown that it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to try the combination. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections because the cited references fail to teach or suggest all of the claim limitations and it would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to try the combination.

Applicants submit that claim 1 recited several features that are not taught or suggested by the references identified above, considered individually or in combination. Further, Applicants have amended claim 1 to further clarify the differences from the cited prior art. For example, claim 1 as amended recites:

1. A method comprising:
identifying, for each customer in a set of one or more customers within the sales territory, a first set of products and/or services for the customer, wherein each product or service in the first set of products and/or services of the customer is identified as satisfying one or more needs of the customers;

identifying, for each customer in the set of customers within the sales territory, a second set of products and/or services for the customer, wherein the second set of products and/or services identifies a provider entity for each product or service in the second set of products and/or services determined to be currently or formerly installed at a customer site of the customer or to be currently or formerly in use by the customer;

determining, with one or more processors associated with one or more computer systems, sales opportunities within the sales territory that indicate at least one of:

a third set of products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that satisfy one or more customer needs, the third set of products and/or services determined based on a match with one or more products and/or services from the first set of products and/or services of at least one customer in the set of customers within the sales territory, and

a fourth set of products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that the customers are likely to consider purchasing, the fourth set of products and/or services determined based on a match with one or more products and/or services from the second set of products and/or services of at least one customer in the set of customers within the sales territory;

formulating a search based at least in part on a selection of one or more parameters related to the customers within the sales territory and products and/or services offered for sale by a given salesperson; and
generating results of the search to be displayed to the given salesperson for the customers in the sales territory, the results of the search including at least the determined sales opportunities, the first set of products and/or services, and the second set of products and/or services.

(Emphasis added).

Independent claim 8 has been similarly amended. Support for the amendments is in the original application, for example in paragraphs [0020] and [0021].

As recited above, a customer's need for products and/or services are identified, for example, based on information provided by the customer. In addition, a second set of products and/or services are identified. As recited, products that are or were installed are considered as well as services that are or were in use by the customer. In order to help a salesperson to determine products and/or services that a customer is likely to purchase (e.g., to complement or exchange with current products and/or services in use by the customer), a provider entity is also identified for each current or former product and/or services. This process provides a richer access to information provided by the customers leading to better sales, service, and customer satisfaction. Specifically, sales opportunities within the sales territory are determined as recited that indicate at least one of products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that satisfy customer needs determined from the first set and products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that the customers are likely to consider purchasing determined from the second set.

Applicants respectfully submit that at least the features of independent claim 1 discussed above are not taught or suggested by Cook, Johnson, or Weston, considered individually or in combination. For example, Cook, Johnson, and Weston fail to teach or suggest "identifying, for each customer in the set of customers within the sales territory, a second set of products and/or services for the customer" and "determining, with one or more processors associated with one or more computer systems, sales opportunities within the sales territory that

indicate ... a fourth set of products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that the customers are likely to consider purchasing, the fourth set of products and/or services determined based on a match with one or more products and/or services from the second set of products and/or services of at least one customer in the set of customers within the sales territory” as recited in claim 1.

As best understood, Cook shows a customer lead management system that is designed to capture and store customer lead and customer needs data concerning particular products and/or services using real time database synchronization for multiple end-users on a computer network. A customer may access the business's website. Once the customer accesses the company's web site, the customer proceeds to view various marketing promotions that the business has created. Upon selecting a desired marketing promotion, the customer can request additional information regarding the desired product or service. The customer can request additional information is by sending an e-mail message to the designated seller's (company representative) requesting the additional product/service information. The response back to the customer may be comprised of an e-mail text message or an e-mail text message with a file attachment containing an "e-brochure" or "e-collateral." An "e-brochure" or "e-collateral" contains information relating to the products or services that the company is promoting and allows the customer to print the information out at his or her local printer.

Applicants respectfully submit that “e-brochure” of Cook is substantially different from the identified second set of products and/or services for the customers of claim 1. As explained above, Cook’s "e-brochure" contains information related to the products or services that the company is promoting and allows the customer to print the content of offered services by the company based on the customers **needs**. In contrast, in claim 1, a second set of products and/or services are identified where the second set of products and/or services identifies a provider entity for each product or service in the second set of products and/or services determined to be currently or formerly installed at a customer site of the customer or to be currently or formerly in use by the customer. The concept of receiving existing products and/or services and their provider entities is completely absent in Cook.

As best understood, the deficiencies of Cook are not remedied by Johnson and Weston. Accordingly, Applicants submit that even if Cook, Johnson, and Weston were combined as suggested by the Office Action (even though there appears to be no motivation for the combination), the resultant combination fails to teach or suggest the embodiment recited in claim 1.

Further, since Cook, Johnson, and Weston fail to teach anything about the recited identified second set of products and/or services to be provided of claim 1, Cook, Johnson, and Weston also fail to teach or suggest “determining, with one or more processors associated with one or more computer systems, sales opportunities within the sales territory that indicate ... a fourth set of products and/or services offered for sale by at least one salesperson associated with the sales territory that the customers are likely to consider purchasing, the fourth set of products and/or services determined based on a match with one or more products and/or services from the second set of products and/or services of at least one customer in the set of customers within the sales territory.” The concept of determining sales opportunities from existing products and/or services of customers and their provider entities is also completely absent in Cook.

Accordingly, Cook, Johnson, and Weston also fail to teach or suggest “generating results of the search to be displayed for the customers , the results of the search including at least the determined sales opportunities,... and the second set of products and/or services” as recited in claim 1. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious by a combination of Cook, Johnson, and Weston, and respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Independent claim 8 has been amended to recite features that are substantially similar to independent claim 1, and is thus allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed for claim 1, and others. Dependent claims depending directly or indirectly from independent claims 1 and 8 respectively and are thus allowable for at least a similar rationale as discussed for claims 1 and 8.

Amendment to the Claims

Unless otherwise specified or addressed in the remarks section, amendments to the claims are made for purposes of clarity, and are not intended to alter the scope of the claims or limit any equivalents thereof. The amendments are supported by the specification and do not add new matter. In addition, by focusing on specific claims and claim elements in the discussion above, applicants do not imply that other claim elements are disclosed or suggested by the references. In addition, any characterizations of claims and/or cited art are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by another prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present disclosure.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

Further, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment in connection with this paper to Deposit Account No. 20-1430.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,

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